2000 Pennsylvanian Editorial Index

By Features

A Conversation with DCNR Sec. John C. Oliver - October - Page 18

A Policy to Protect Against Improper Employee Computer Use - Dennis S. Deutsch - November - Page 24

A Tribute to the Pennsylvanian and Loyal Contributors - December - Page 21

A Valuable Gift to Pennsylvania - Michel Lefevre - July - Page 16

A Wealth of Information - January - Page 18

"Agility" on the Roadways - April - Page 34

An Ounce of Prevention - Pamela Y. Hall - May - Page 40

Apples to Apples - PLGIT - August - Page 26

Avoiding First Amendment Violations - Curt Witynski - December - Page 28

Bad Weather and Beyond - September - Page 40

Balancing the Budget - August - Page 40

Building Green in PA - James S. Toothaker - October - Page 24

Building (Out) for the Future - Nancy Grundahl - May - Page 24

CPR for PA's Downtowns - John L. Gann Jr. - September - Page 46

Citizens Suits - A Growing Risk - Randall G. Hurst - March - Page 44

Closing the Loop - Robert G. Stone - April - Page 38

Competitive Advantage - John L. Gann Jr. - June - Page 24

Cracking the Code - Blaine A. Lucas and Michael McAuliffe Miller - May - Page 16

Don't Get Bugged! - April - Page 46

"E-mail as Evidence" - Jim Fredo - December - Page 34

Educating the Public - Amy Farkas - June - Page 20

Effective Managers Must Learn the Eight "Cs" of Good Communication - November - Page 26

Emergency Measures - Attorney Andrew C. Sheely - September - Page 44

Employment Tests - Linda M. Costa - November - Page 28

Fighting Fire the Right Way - June - Page 34

Financial Responsibility - August - Page 32

For Your Municipality's Sake - May - Page 34

From Wastelands to Wetlands - CEC of PA - February - Page 16

Getting to Know C2P2 - DCNR - August - Page 20

GIS and Planning for the Future - Joseph Brett - February - Page 22

Great Expectations - Cole Hendrix - January - Page 28

Happy Trails . . . To York - Gregory Myers and Jeffrey Shue - March - Page 28

International Intrigue - Mendi C. Lowe, P.E. - May - Page 32

Keep It Clean (and Safe) - David Allen Hines - May - Page 20

Leadership: Awakening the Best - Carl H. Neu, Jr. - January - Page 18

Leading the Way for Leisure - March - Page 32

Looking Back for New Ideas - William B. Drawbaugh P.E. - February - Page 14

Not Just Fun and Games - Linda Caldwell and Jesse Ellis - January - Page 40

Oh, Deer . . . What to Do? - Barry Bessler - March - Page 38

On the Surface . . . John M. DeMartino - April - Page 28

"One Call" Is All it Takes! - Thomas J Ward. Jr. - April - Page 24

PA Local Government Investment Trust Celebrates - December - Page 13

Pardon Me, Your Attitude is Showing - Bob Perks - November - Page18

Paving the Way for Improvement - April - Page 26

Performance Measurement: An Improvement Tool - Donald J. LaBelle and Richard A.Ruiz - November - Page 19

Plowing Through Winter - September - Page 26

Police and Firefighter Testing - Linda Costa - August - Page 48

Protecting the Past - July - Page 22

Recreation, Ephrata Style - David C. Lloyd - March - Page 22

Recycling PA's Roadways - Michael L. Polak - Page 18

Reeling in the CARP Project - Marlin D. Moore - March - Page 18

Sewer Systems Savings - Barry Ewald and Dale R. Kratzer, P.E. - October - Page 32

Sounding Off - Richard Hedin - June - Page 30

Stay Well, Live Longer - PA Department of Aging - May - Page 38

Stuck in a Rut? - Stephen Nemeth - September - Page 20

SWAP for Better Water - Joseph J. Lee - October - Page 26

Taking Back Our Playgrounds - March - Page 36

Tax Increment Financing - Sara Davis Buss - June - Page 16

The Digital Divide - December - Page 9

The Engineering Maze - John K. O'Connell - February - Page 24

The Right Thing to Do - January - Page 30

Today's Technology: Getting Started - Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc. - December - Page 33

Voluntary Benefits - Cass Gibson - April - Page 52

Voluntary Benefits - Cass Gibson - May - Page 42

Voluntary Benefits - Cass Gibson - June - Page 38

Voluntary Benefits - Cass Gibson - July - Page 28

Where to Turn - July - Page 26

Worth the Risk? - April - Page 48

Zoning Revisited - John L. Gann Jr. - May - Page 28

3 - 2 - 1 Countdown to PR! - Alan Gesford, P.E., P.L.S.

10 Habits of Highly Effective Councils - Carl H. Neu, Jr. - January - Page 34

By Authors

Bessler, Barry - Oh, Deer . . . What to Do? - March - Page 38

Brett, Joseph - GIS and Planning for the Future - February - Page 22

Buss, Sara Davis - Tax Increment Financing - June - Page 16

Caldwell, Linda - Not Just Fun and Games - January - Page 40

Consulting Engineers Council of PA - From Watelands to Wetlands - February - Page 16

Costa, Linda - Police and Firefighter Testing - August - Page 48

Costa, Linda - Employment Tests - November - Page 28

DCNR - Getting to Know C2P2 - August - Page 20

DeMartino, John M. - On the Surface. . . - April - Page 28

Deutsch, Dennis S. - A Police to Protect Against Improper Employee Computer Use - November - Page 24

Drawhaugh P. F. - William B. - Looking Back for New Idea?, - February - Page 14
Ellis, Jesse - Not Just Fun and Games - January - Page 40
Ewald, Barry - Sewer Systems Savings - October - Page 32
Fredo, Jim - "E-mail as Evidence" - December - Page 34
Amy Farkas - Educating the Public - June - Page 20
Gann Jr., John L. - CPR for PA's Downtowns - September - Page 46
Gann Jr., John L. - Competitive Advantage - June - Page 24
Gann Jr., John L. - Zoning Revisited - May - Page 28
Gesford, P.E., P.L.S., Alan - 3 - 2 - 1 . . . Countdown to PR!
Gibson, Cass - Voluntary Benefits - April - Page 52
Gibson, Cass - Voluntary Benefits - July - Page 28
Gibson, Cass - Voluntary Benefits - June - Page 38
Gibson, Cass - Voluntary Benefits - May - Page 42
Grundahl, Nancy - Building (Out) for the Future - May - Page 24
Hall, Pamela Y. - An Ounce of Prevention - May - Page 40
Hedin, Richard - Sounding Off - June - Page 30
Hendrix, Cole - Great Expectations - January - Page 28
Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc. - Today's Technology: Getting Started - December - Page 33
Hines, David Allen - Keep It Clean (and Safe) - May - Page 20
Hurst, Randall G. - Citizens Suits - A Growing Risk - March - Page 44
Kratzer, P.E., Dale R. - Sewer Systems Savings - October - Page 32
LaBelle, Donald J. - Performance Measurement: An Improvement Tool - November - Page 19
Lee, Joseph J. - SWAP for Better Water - October - Page 26
Lefevre, Michel - A Valuable Gift to Pennsylvania - July - Page 16
Lloyd, David C. - Recreation, Ephrata Style - March - Page 22
Lowe, P.E., Mendi C. - International Intrigue - May - Page 32
Lucas, Blaine A. - Cracking the Code - May - Page 16
Miller, Michael McAuliffe - Cracking the Code - May - Page 16
Moore, Marlin D. - Reeing in the CARP Project - March - Page 18
Myers, Gregory - Harry Trails . . . To York - March - Page 28
Nemeth, Stephen - Stuck in a Rut? - September - Page 20
Neu, Jr., Carl H. - Leadership: Awakening the Best - January - Page 18
Neu, Jr., Carl H. - 10 Habits of Highly Effective Councils - January - Page 34
Nemeth, Stephen - Stuck in a Rut? - September - Page 20
O'Connell, John K. - The Engineering Maze - February - Page 24
Oliver, Sec. John C. - A Conversation with DCNR
Perks, Bob - Pardon Me, Your Attitude is Showing - November - Page 18
PLGIT - Apples to Apples - August - Page 26
Polak, Michael L. - Recycling PA's Roadways - April - Page 18
Ruiz, Richard A. - Performance Measurement: An Improvement Tool - November - Page 19
Sheely, Attorney Andrew C. - Emergency Measures - September - Page 44
Shue, Jeffrey - Happy Trails . . . To York - March - Page 28
Stone, Robert G. - Closing the Loop - April - Page 38
Toothaker, James S. - Building Green in PA - October - Page 24
Ward Jr., Thomas J. - "One-Call" is All it Takes! - April - Page 24
Witynski, Curt - Avoiding First Amendment Violations - December - Page 28

(continued from page 40)

Conservation Plan for the North Branch of the Susquehanna River. The study area is a two-mile-wide corridor along the river from the confluence with the Lackawanna River in Luzerne County in the south to the New York State-Bradford County line and the Great Bend area in Susquehanna County. The study area passes through five counties (Luzerne, Lackawanna, Wyoming, Bradford and Susquehanna) and more than 40 municipalities. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is the major partner in this project and will be producing more than 30 GIS data and planning maps for this study. The Conservation Districts from all five counties are also partnering with PEC and are assisting in the data collection and public input process.

A significant aspect of this project has been the community input process. PEC has held several public meetings and created a steering committee of more than 40 organizations and individuals that will assist PEC and SRBC in the preparation of the plan. The role of the steering committee is to review the data collected, review the maps and assist in the creation of the implementation projects. It is hoped that the committee will continue on after the Rivers Conservation Plan is produced and oversee the implementation of the plan.

Several implementation projects are already developing along the corridor, even though the Rivers Conservation Plan will not be completed for another year. Wyalusing Borough in Bradford County, in partnership with PEC, will be submitting a grant request to PA DCNR in November for a combination stream bank stabilization plan/park feasibility and master plan. Under DCNR guidelines, municipalities that participate in the planning process and endorse the final plan will be eligible to receive state grants to implement state grants to implement projects proposed in the plan. Wyalusing Borough is a very active community and has already received and implemented a Growing Greener grant for this project.

Two other communities in the southern end of the study corridor, Exeter Borough and the Borough of West Pittston in Luzerne County, are also going to partner with PEC. In this case, the boroughs and PEC will prepare a feasibility study/master plan for a six-mile loop trail location along the Susquehanna River and Hicks Creek. This project will not only provide a recreational amenity for the community but also act as a riparian buffer.

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